(c) the mechanism to institute such food processing centres in various regions of the country to preserve the food in the preiod of abundance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Food Processing Industries under its plan Schemes provides financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid and soft loan to Non-Governmental Organisations, Cooperatives, Public Sector Undertakings and Private Industries etc. for the development of food processing industries. These Schemes are project oriented and not State specific. During the year 1997-98 an amount of Rs. 22.87 crores has been utilised under the Plan Schemes of the Ministry.

The Ministry does not set up any food processing unit directly in any State.

The thrust areas of the Plan assitance are;

1. Establishment of post harvest infrastructure particularly cold chain facilities.

2. Establishment of Food Processing Industrial Estates/Parks.

3. Setting up/expansion/modernisation of food processing industries.

4. Research & Development.

5. Human Resource Development.

Sickness of NERAMAC

2103. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken to remove the sickness of North Eastern Regional Agricultural marketikng Corporation (NERAMAC);

(b) whether Government have any proposal to have more food processing industries under NERAMAC; and

(c) if so, where will these be located in North-Eastern States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) In December, 1996, NERAMAC was referred to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) because of its sickness, BIFR appointed the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) as the Operating Agency (OA) for preparation of a rehabilitation package in respect of NERAMAC. The rehabilitation package prepared by IDBI was considred by BIFR in April, 1998. As directed by BIFR, action has been taken for obtaining Government's approval for the induction of fresh funds as also financial restructuring of NERAMAC.

(b) and(c)There is no proposal to have more food processing industries under NERAMAC. However, as a part of the rehabilitation package prepared by the OA, it is proposed to establish a post-harvest handling centre for ginger at Burnihat, Meghalaya.

Vacant posts of Directors of AIR Stations

2104. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that more than 75 stations of All India Radio are functioning without any Director; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government have taken any steps to fill up all these posts which are vacant for the last two or three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, how much more time will be taken to fill up these vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) Yes, Sir. The posts of Directors at 106 stations of All India Radio are presently vacant.

(b) to (d) The shortage in Station Directors' grade is on account of officers in the feeder grade not being eligible for promotion. All officers eligible for promotion upto 1.10.1997 have already been promoted. Action for considering promotion of officers who have become eligible as on 1.10.1998 has already been initiated.